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August 23, 2019

Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor of California
Capitol Building, 1st Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 605 (Maienschein) – REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE

Dear Governor Newsom:

Disability Rights California (DRC), a non-profit advocacy organization that advances and protects the rights of Californians with disabilities, **supports AB 605 and requests your signature.**

This bill would require a local educational agency (LEA) to provide an individual with exceptional needs who requires the use of an assistive technology device, often known as interactive communication devices or “voice” devices, with continuous access to that device while the individual is enrolled in that LEA. It would also require a LEA to be responsible for providing an individual with exceptional needs who requires the use of an assistive technology device with continued access to that device, or to a comparable device when that individual, due to enrollment in another LEA, ceases to be enrolled in that LEA.

Currently, school districts in California allow usage of these devices, many of them only at the designated institution and during school hours. Some LEAs have allowed access to continue using these devices at home, during extended holidays or vacation times. However, these students are generally the students who have actively involved parents that advocate for the extended usage. Students in economically challenged districts or households are often not given their voices outside of the school day. By

requiring access to assistive devices to be continuous, such as during breaks and holidays, students who use these devices will be able to expand their communicative interactions within their home and communities when they would otherwise not be able to do so.

For these reasons, DRC supports this bill and requests your signature. Please contact me if you have any questions about our position or if I can provide any further information.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Curtis Child". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Curtis" and last name "Child" clearly distinguishable.

Curtis Child
Legislative Director
Disability Rights California

cc: Honorable Brian Maienschein, California State Assembly
Shanna Ezzell, Office of Assembly Member Maienschein
Jennifer Johnson, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of Legislative Affairs
Sam Miller, Assistant Legislative Deputy, Office of Legislative Affairs